UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/2091
29 February 1996

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Security Council appoints new Prosecutor for International Criminal Tribunals for Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, to take effect 1 October.

* Secretary-General says, in some cases, United Nations can provide valuable and cost-effective alternatives to unilateral action.

* Rwanda says it needs help with reconstruction not security; will welcome UN office if UNAMIR cannot adjust mandate to assist with rebuilding efforts.

* International Narcotics Control Board concerned at weak money laundering laws, abuse of "designer drugs" and overuse of Ritalin to treat attention deficit disorder in children.

* UNCTAD's Secretary-General says its daily work and future programme will be affected by UN's financial crisis; asks Member States not to suggest new mandates.

* Trusteeship Council has fulfilled mandate and should be abolished, Malaysia tells Special Committee on Charter.

* Scientists from United States, United Kingdom and Sri Lanka share United Nations environmental prize.

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The Security Council today appointed Louise Arbour of Canada as the new Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. In unanimously adopting resolution 1047 (1996), the Council decided the appointment will date from 1 October, when the resignation of the current Prosecutor, Justice Richard J. Goldstone, takes effect.

Justice Arbour is a member of the Court of Appeals for Ontario Canada. Previously, she was a trial judge for the High Court of Justice, Supreme Court

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of Ontario and an Associate Professor and Associate Dean at the Osgoode Hall Law School of York University. She has taught in criminal law, criminal procedure, evidence and droit and published extensively on criminal law, human rights, civil liberties and gender issues.

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A mentality of detachment threatens to become a model for international relations, according to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. Addressing the Rio Branco Institute in Brasilia today, he said many scorned the concept of an international community. Increasingly, far-away problems were not a concern. The carnage in Liberia was seen as someone else's problem, the fight to restore democracy in Haiti as someone else's struggle. Individuals and Member States must decide on their role, responsibilities and on what basis they would interact. Their choices would shape communities and determine the nature of the international environment.

The United Nations was not established as a substitute for individual action by Member States but, in some cases, it could provide useful alternatives and be a valuable substitute for unilateral action, the Secretary-General said. Countries with the capacity could act alone, but the UN could be a cost-effective way to contain regional conflict, promote democracy and human rights, curb refugee flows and bring stability to troubled regions. If the UN was not used, Member States would have fewer options in emergencies and those with the capacity would be under greater pressure to act alone during humanitarian catastrophes, conflicts and aggression.

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The situation in Rwanda was improving and what it needed was assistance for reconstruction not security, the country's Permanent Representative said today. Ambassador Manzi Bakuramutsa told correspondents that concerted efforts were being made to encourage the return of refugees. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) could stay on, if it responded to the country's needs and helped with reconstruction. If not, then his Government would welcome a United Nations office. He believed strongly that the UN's role could be changed to meet Rwanda's new needs, he added.

Unfortunately, Rwanda had not yet been given a list of UNAMIR equipment which had to be removed from the country despite a request several weeks ago, Ambassador Bakuramutsa continued. It had also asked the Secretary-General if the Government could keep UNAMIR trucks to help with the return of refugees. Whenever the UNAMIR mandate was up for renewal, negative reports on his country become more frequent. No one was talking about Rwanda's reconciliation and reconstruction efforts and its work to set up a judicial system to deal the perpetrators of genocide.

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If Governments could trace and break the money trail, they might be able to attack the problem of drug trafficking all over the world, according to Herbert Okun, a member of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB). Introducing the Board's annual report yesterday, he told correspondents that vulnerable money trails were often the only way to trace organizers of illegal drug operations, but many countries lacked appropriate laws or procedures to prevent the laundering of criminal proceeds. There was also no concerted world-wide action against money laundering nor any reporting system on the seizure and confiscation of drug trafficking proceeds. Preventing money laundering was a problem for developing countries where the vast sums controlled by criminal groups could exacerbate corruption, Mr. Okun added.

The report also draws special attention to the sharp rise in the world-wide use of methylphenidate, a stimulant marketed under the brand name Ritalin, which is used in the United States and some other countries to treat attention deficit disorder in children. However, the disorder might be over diagnosed and Ritalin prescribed before other treatment was considered, the report says. Many children remained on the drug into adolescence and even adulthood, with serious health consequences. The substance was also abused by adolescents who obtained it illegally from children undergoing treatment.

Mr. Okun said the Board was alarmed at the growing abuse of synthetic drugs, which were made in bathtubs or laboratories and include methamphetamine, also known as "ice" or "shabu" and the designer drug "ecstasy". They were popular among young people and, unlike heroin or cocaine, were produced in the country of consumption or moved within relatively small regions, making it harder to curb their production and shipment. Abuse was a major problem in the Far East, Hawaii and western United States.

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The daily work and future programme of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) will be affected by the UN's financial crisis, as well as the correlated issue of reform, according to UNCTAD's Secretary-General Rubens Ricupero. Addressing the UNCTAD Trade and Development Board this week, he said that as he must reduce overall capacity Member States should refrain from suggesting further mandates. They should also be prepared to terminate some programmes.

UNCTAD would aim for a 12 per cent vacancy rate among professional staff and seven per cent rate among the general service staff during the biennium, he said. The main options were non-renewal of short-term contracts and the non-replacement of professional staff who reached retirement age. Financial constraints or administrative questions should not be the main factor in determining approaches to issues. While efficiency in costs and savings was

needed, his ultimate goal was to provide better services for the international community at the lowest possible cost, he added.

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The United Nations Trusteeship Council had fulfilled its mandate and should be abolished, according to the Permanent Representative of Malaysia, Razali Ismail. He told the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization that Member States must be ready to disband structures whose raison d'etre had ceased to exist. The Special Committee dealt yesterday with the question of the Trusteeship Council, the maintenance of peace and security and United Nations sanctions.

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Three scientists from the United States, the United Kingdom and Sri Lanka were awarded the 1995 United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) Sasakawa Environment Prize for outstanding contributions to the protection and management of the world environment. The Prize, which was established in 1984, is considered one of the most prestigious and valuable environmental awards in the world and winners are selected by a distinguished panel of international leaders and environmentalists.

The Director of the Missouri Botanical Garden, Peter Raven and Norman Myers of the United Kingdom shared half of the $200,000 UNEP Sasakawa Prize for their work over nearly three decades to investigate, document and analyze the scientific background to two major environmental problems: the decline of tropical forests and the worldwide loss of biodiversity. They have broadened the scope of their work to include population, poverty, desertification, global warming and consumption patterns. The other winner was Professor Canaganayagan Suriyakumaran of Sri Lanka, a pioneer in the environmental field, whose work in fostering concepts of multi-sectoralism has helped shape responses to environmental challenges.

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